

**Testimony of Kevin McCarthy on Behalf of the Kalamazoo Regional Chamber of  
Commerce in Support of House Concurrent Resolution 39**

Good afternoon. My name is Kevin McCarthy, and I am here to speak in support of House Concurrent Resolution 39 in my role as Chairperson of the Kalamazoo Regional Chamber of Commerce's Task Force on the Gun Lake Casino. The Chamber has 2,300 business members located in southwest Michigan who are keenly interested in the economic development of that region.

We support the establishment of the Casino with a Class III gaming compact for a very simple reason: this project will create, both directly and indirectly, badly needed jobs in Michigan; will benefit other local employers; and provide significant revenues to state and local units of government. With a Class III compact, the number of jobs created will be maximized. It is our understanding that roughly 1,800 jobs, averaging \$40,000 per year in pay and benefits, will be created directly by this project, and that approximately 3,100 spin-off jobs will be created. This is a great and much-needed gain for our region and for this State.

We have carefully studied the impact that other Native American casinos have had on their communities and we have analyzed the arguments raised by opponents of this casino. Based on this review and analysis, we are convinced that this economic development project will have a positive net economic effect on southwest Michigan and the State as a whole, because more good paying jobs will be created at the casino, suppliers to the casino will benefit and employ more people, and complementary businesses will also benefit and provide more employment opportunities. Twenty million dollars in annual payments to vendors are expected from the casino. This is the kind of economic activity that we as a State need to support.

Support for this economic development project is broad and diverse. Supporters include local Chambers of Commerce and labor unions as well tourism and lodging groups such as the Kalamazoo County Convention & Visitors Bureau and the Kent County Lodging Association. We all recognize the economic benefit of this project to the State.

For the economic benefit of this State, particularly at a time when jobs and economic activity are needed, we urge you to pass H.C.R. 39. Thank you.